

831.6
Sch/Son
43255



00043255

**THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY**

Town Hall, Bombay.

SONG OF THE BELL,
AND OTHER SELECTIONS
FROM
SCHILLER'S MINOR POEMS.

THE SONG OF THE BELL,

AND OTHER SELECTIONS

FROM

FREDERICK SCHILLER'S

MINOR POEMS.

TRANSLATED BY S. ROBINSON.



WILLIAMS' AND NORGATE,
14, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON;
AND 20, SOUTH FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH;
AND
J. E. CORNISH, AND JOHNSON & RAWSON, MANCHESTER.

MDCCLXXVIII.

43255
ae



00043255



THE following translations are an attempt to combine a faithful adherence to the originals with the natural and easy flow of English versification :—in other words, an endeavour to make Schiller speak, in some sort, as he might have spoken, if, preserving the thoughts, images, sentiment and tone of the German, he had used the English language as the medium of expressing them. This surely is the proper end of translation. With what success the Translator has done this, others must judge rather than himself.

Some of these translations were published many years ago ; some have appeared more recently in another form, but have never been published ; a few have never been printed before : all have undergone a careful revision, and are now collected and offered to the public, not without a hope that they may afford some pleasure to those who, not understanding the German, may be glad to form an acquaintance with the MINOR POEMS of the great author of WILLIAM TELL and WALLENSTEIN, and possibly to some also who are able to compare them with the originals, and may not be displeased to see the attempt made to exhibit them in an English dress.

WILMSLOW,

March, 1867.

To this fresh impression of his little Work, the Translator has added three or four new pieces, and has taken the opportunity of revising it, and of making several alterations of passages and words, which he hopes are improvements.

BLACKBROOK COTTAGE,

June, 1878.



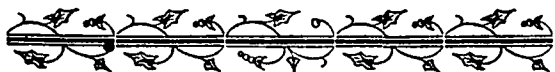
INDEX.

	PAGE
1800 " THE GERMAN MUSE	1
1782 ROUSSEAU'S GRAVE	3
1788 THE GODS OF GREECE	4
1795 THE ANTIQUE STATUE TO THE NORTHERN TRAVELLER ..	12
1895 THE IDEAL	18
1795 EVENING	17
— NATURE AND THE SCHOOL	18
— PROVERB OF CONFUCIUS	23
— THE VEILED STATUE OF SAIS	24
— THE SOWER.. .. .	28
1796 THE PUPPET SHOW	29
— EXPECTATION	30
— THE PARTITION OF THE EARTH	38
— THE LAMENT OF CERES	35
— THE BARD OF THE OLDEN TIME	41
— DITHYRAMB.. .. .	43
— THE MAIDEN FROM THE STRANGER	45
1797 THE SECRET	47
— CANADIAN DEATH-SONG	49
— HOPE	52
— THE KNIGHT OF TOGGENBURG	53

INDEX

	PAGE
1707 LIGHT AND WARMTH	51
— THE WORDS OF FAITH.. .. .	52
— THE RING OF POLYCRATES	53
1798 FELICITY	65
— THE MAIDEN'S COMPLAINT'	69
1799 THE WORDS OF ILLUSION	71
— THE SONG OF THE BELL	73
1800 THE ANTIQUITIES AT PARIS	91
1801 THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CENTURY	92
— HERO AND LEANDER	94
— YEARNINGS	105
1802 THE FOUR AGES OF THE WORLD	107
— THEKLÁ: A SPIRIT SONG	111
— CASSANDRA	113
1803 THE FESTIVAL OF VICTORY	119
— THE YOUTH AT THE STREAMLET	126
— THE PILGRIM	128
1795 THE MUSE'S FAREWELL TO THE READER	131



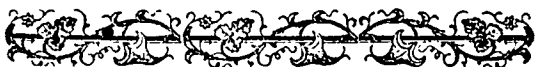


This little Book, inscribed in its original form to

Mrs. Wilhelm Colin,

is still dedicated to her Memory.





I do not know what I should be,
My gentle Muse, by thee forgot ;
But sick at heart am I to see,
What thousands are who know thee not.

Schiller.





SELECTIONS

FROM

'SCHILLER'S MINOR POEMS.



THE GERMAN MUSE, 1800.

No Augustus' royal face,
No Medicean princely race,
 Smiled upon the German muse :
Fame fostered not her infant lays ;
To nurse her growth with quickening rays,
 Kings and nobles all refuse.

From Germania's greatest son,
Even from great Frederick's throne,
 Nor honour she received, nor aid :
The German's boast may prouder be,
More strongly beat his heart that He,
 HE HIMSELF his worth has made.

So in higher tide along
Rolls the stream of German song,
And with loftier feeling burns ;
And in its native fulness swelling,
And from the heart's deep fountain welling,
Bond of formal rules it spurns.





ROUSSEAU'S GRAVE, 1782.

MONUMENT, our time's dishonouring brand,
Lasting scandal of thy mother-land,

Rousseau's grave, I greet thee with a tear!
Peace and quiet in a life of pain,
Peace and quiet soughtest thou in vain,
Peace and quiet found'st thou here.

How long will the old wound still be cherished?
Once was darkness, and the wise man perished:

Then the light came, and he perished then:—
Socrates—the prey of Sophist teachers;
Rousseau—through the zeal of Christian preachers,
Rousseau—who would make of Christians men.





THE GODS OF GREECE, 1788.

O'ER the beauteous world when Ye presided,
And in Pleasure's gently leading band
Happier generations Ye yet guided,
Lovely Beings of the Fable-Land !
When Your joyous worship yet was cherished,
Ah ! how different, different was that day !
Ere Your fane and votive wreaths had perished,
Venus Amathusia !

When the Poet's magic art surrounded
Still with pictured veil Truth's rigid lore,
Forth Creation in her fulness bounded,
And that was felt which never shall be more ;
Nature's form a nobler aspect brightened,
Man more fondly gazed upon her face,
All revealing to the eye enlightened,
All—a latent Godhead's trace.

Where naught now, our wise ones say, is gliding,
Save a soulless fire-ball through the sky,
Once his golden car was Helios guiding
Midst his Signs in silent majesty.
Oreads peopled every caverned mountain,
Lived a Dryad in each verdant tree,
And a Naiad's urn the sparkling fountain
And its silvery stream set free.

Daphne to yon bay for aid was clinging,
Niobe is silent in that stone,
Syrinx to those reeds her woes was singing,
Yonder grove heard Philomela's moan ;
In yon brook Demeter's tears were falling
O'er Persephone to Hades ta'en,
And Cythera from this hill was calling
For her beauteous friend, in vain !

Then for love Deucalion's daughters suing,
Oft the heavenly powers their heaven forsook ;
One of Pyrrha's beauteous offspring wooing,
Lato's son assumed the shepherd's crook :
God and hero, mortal and immortal,
Linked by Eros in a bond divine,
Entering Amathusia's sacred portal
Worshipped at the self-same shrine.

Then the altar of the Graces tending,
Bent the Priestess there her suppliant knee,
Silent wishes to Cythera blending,
With soft vows to the sweet Sisters Three.
Even the Ranks of Heaven she taught, and ever
Thence to govern with a milder sway,
And the enchanting zone to guard for ever,
Which the Thunderer's arm can stay.

Heavenly and immortal was the fire,
Which in Pindar's hymns of triumph glowed,
Streamed harmonious from Arion's lyre,
Down on Phideas' chiselled marble flowed :
Nobler forms and loftier feelings blended
Spoke a lineage stamped with higher worth ;
Gods, who wandering from above descended,
Found their heaven renewed on earth.

Dearer, worthier of a God's bestowing,
Was the gift by nature's choice decreed ;
When fair Iris bent her bow, more glowing
Was the pearl-drop on the dewy mead ;
Lovelier dawned the morning, when surrounded
With Hemera's rosy veil she broke ;
Sweeter far the flute's soft music sounded,
Which the Shepherd-God awoke.

Fresher was the youthful bloom and finer,
Which the cheek of Ganymede revealed ;
Deeds were more heroic and diviner,
Flashing from Tritonia's Gorgon-shield ;
Softer was, whilst Hymen still presided,
Holier far, the heart's eternal band ;
Even life's tender thread more smoothly glided,
Through the Parcæ's rigid hand.

O'er your joyous rites a shade of sadness
No harsh task of self-denial threw ;
Hearts might beat with undissembled gladness,
For the Blest-Ones kindred owned with you.
Lovely things with holy ones were blended ;
Never was the God of joys ashamed,
Which no coyly-blushing Muse offended,
And no gentle Grace had blamed.

All your fanes proud palaces resembled,
Honoured were ye in the hero-game,
When the Isthmus festive crowds assembled,
And the chariot thundering onward came.
Your's the curious, mazy, soul-felt dancing
Round the altar decked with offerings rare,
From your brows the crown of victory glancing,
Chaplets on your perfumed hair.

Evoes of the joyous Thyrsus-Swinger,
And the harnessed panthers' splendid wain,
Heralded the mighty Pleasure-bringer ;
Faun and Satyr gamboled in his train :
Phrenzied Mænads, round him madly roaring,
In their dances praise his generous wine ;
And the brown-cheeked God to all is pouring
Goblets of the drink divine.

Then beside the last couch of the dying
Stood no ghastly Phantom : one kiss drank
From the lips the last of life, and sighing
His extinguished torch a Genius sank.
One, a mortal born, the righteous sentence
In the judgment-balance weighed below ;
And the Erinnyes, won to slow repentance,
Melted at the Thracian's woe.

In Elysium's groves might then recover
Every Shade the pleasure once most dear ;
Faithful love there found the faithful lover,
And his ready car the charioteer :
Linus sounds again the wonted measure,
Might Orestes there his old friend know,
Find Admetus there his valued treasure,
Philoctetes bend his bow.

Higher prizes than to men were meted,
When on virtue's battle-ground they strove ;
And the brave, their noble work completed,
Climbed to heaven and sat with Gods above :
'Fore the mighty Dead-demander paler
Hades grew, and bowed with trembling air ;
From Olympus to the struggling sailor
Smiling came the Twin-born Pair. •

Lovely world, where art thou ?—Where thy glory ?
Where the fresh bloom of thy youthful prime ?
Only in the Fable-land the story
Can we find of that once happy time.
All thy fields lie desolate and lonely,
Trace of Godhead I no longer view,
Of that life-warm form the shadows only :—
Not the world which once I knew.

All that lovely bloom, alas ! is vanished
In the biting north wind's icy blast ;
All that universe of Gods is banished,
Leaving scarce a memory of the past :
When I search the heavens—with deep emotion
Thee, Selene, find I no more there ;
“ Where ! ”—I cry through forest and through ocean—
“ Are ye ? ”—Echo answers—“ Where ? ”

All unconsciously her gifts bestowing,
By her own grand features unimprest,
Hardly even the soul which guides her knowing,
By no blessedness of mine more blest,
Carelessly her Artist's skill surveying,
Like a timepiece with its measured sound,
Gravitation's slavish law obeying,
Godless Nature creéps her round.

Every morn herself again unbinding,
Every day she digs her grave anew,
And the Months, their own direction finding,
Unassisted now their course pursue :
Back to their own homes the Gods have speeded,
Useless in a world to manhood grown,
Which, its leading-strings no longer needed,
Now has learned to walk alone.

Yes ! have speeded home ! a world forsaking
Of its fairest, noblest charms bereft !
And each life-like tone and colour taking,
Save the SOULLESS FORM have nothing left :
From Time's all-destroying deluge flying,
On the heights of Pindus now they stay ;
And what aye in song shall bloom undying,
Must to actual sense decay.



NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR TO THE PRECEDING POEM.

Objections have been made by some persons to this Poem, as having an irreligious tendency; but surely without much reason. It was published in 1788, when the Author was in his 29th year, and in the glow of enthusiasm which was kindled in his mind by his first becoming acquainted, through the instigation of Wieland, with the Greek Literature in its original language. It ought to be regarded, therefore, not as expressing his own religious feelings, but simply the ardent admiration with which the still youthful Poet, and from a Poet's point of view, was inspired by the beautiful and poetical Mythology of Greece. Schiller was, the translator believes, open through life, to deep religious impressions, and there have been probably not many Poets who have left behind them fewer "lines which dying they would wish to blot." The translator has, however, omitted three or four stanzas which were objected to in the first edition of the Poem, and which the Author himself omitted in the second.





THE ANTIQUE STATUE TO THE
NORTHERN TRAVELLER.

1795.

NOR stream, nor ocean, could thy journey stay,
Nor even the Alpine mountain's dizzy way ;
And thou art come to prove that beauty's worth,
Which fame has bruited o'er the astonished earth .
Free as thou art to touch the Holy now,
Are we even yet the nearer—I and thou ?





THE IDEAL.

1895.

— — — — —

AND wilt thou faithless from me sever,
With all thy sorrows, all thy joys ?
Wilt thou relentless part for ever
With all thy gentle phantasies ?
Will, fugitive, no fond caresses
My golden prime of life detain ?
Ah no ! thy hurrying wave still presses
Down to eternity's dark main.

Quenched are the brilliant suns which shed
On youth's gay path their cheering light ;
The fair ideals all are fled
Which swelled my breast with wild delight ;
That lovely faith is vanished too
In beings that in dreams flit by ;
What seem'd so heavenly fair and true,
The prey of hard reality.

As once with passionate embrace
Pygmalion to the marble clung,
Till on the statue's icy face
The glow of life and feeling hung,
So I, with kindred passion fired,
Fair Nature to my bosom prest,
Till, by the genial warmth inspired,
She breathed on my poetic breast.

The mute one soon a language found,
And soon with equal ardour burned,
Gave to my heart an answering sound,
And warm the kiss of love returned :
Then lived for me the tree, the flower,
Then sang the fountain's silvery fall,
And even the lifeless felt my power,
And echoed back the poet's call.

The circling All tumultuous strove
To rend the breast's too narrow bound,
And forth I rushed the world to rove
Of word and deed, of form and sound :
How great that world appeared, how bright,
While in the bud it lay unseen !
How little, opening to the light !
That little—ah ! how poor and mean !

Fond every fancy to pursue,
Unbridled yet, unbroke by care,
How, winged with ardour, forth I flew,
In youthful pride the race to dare !
Even to where ether's palest star
Almost eludes the piercing sight,
Naught was too lofty, naught too far,
'To bound my bold adventurous flight.

How lightly was I borne along,
And nothing thought too hard to gain !
How gaily danced with joyous song
Before Life's car the attendant train !
Love, who the tender promise breathed,
And Fortune, crowned with golden rays,
And Fame, her brow with stars inwreathed,
And Truth, who courts the sun's bright gaze.

But soon, deserted by my guide,
Who fled but half our journey done,
The faithless Pleasures stepped aside,
And quickly vanished one by one :
Light-footed Fortune backward drew ;
Knowledge slaked not the thirst of youth ;
And Doubt his chilling shadows threw
Round the bright sunny form of Truth.

And Glory's wreath—a sacred thing!

Profaned I saw round common brows ;

And all too quickly passed life's spring,

And Love forgot his flattering vows ;

And lonelier still the prospect grew,

And dark, and darker still, the day ;

And Hope a fainter glimmering threw,

That scarcely showed the dubious way.

And who, of all that jovial band,

Will loving cheer the deepening gloom,

And comforting beside me stand,

And follow to the darksome tomb ?

Thou, Friendship, who my load hast shared,

Each wound with gentle hand hast bound,

For every pain and sorrow cared,

Thou, whom I early sought and found !

And she who every art employs

Like thee to calm the stormy breast ;

Who labours slow, and ne'er destroys—

Sweet Occupation, soothing guest !

She—who unwearied grain by grain

Patient the eternal fabric rears,

Yet steals away, till none remain,

Moments, and hours, and days, and years.





EVENING.

1795.

SINK, beaming god!—The thirsty earth drinks up
The quickening dew; home plods the wearied hind;
Faintly the horses draw:
Thy chariot downward bend!

See! from the crystal surface of the waves
Who smiling welcomes thee?—Thine heart replies!
Swifter the horses fly:
'Tis Thetis welcomes thee.

Quick from his chariot springs into her arms
The charioteer, and Cupid grasps the reins;
The horses quiet stand,
And drink the cooling flood.

Over the dusky heavens glides softly forth
The fragrant Night, whom follows gentle Love:
Phœbus, the loving, rests;
Ye, too, may rest and love.





GENIUS, OR
NATURE AND THE SCHOOL.

1795.



Do I, thou askest, believe what the masters of
wisdom have taught me,
All to the truth of which
Learners implicitly swear ?
Perfect peace to attain can science alone be my
guider ?
Only a system's support
Prop up the happy and good ?
Must I the impulse mistrust which benignantly
warns me ; the law, too,
Which thou, Nature, thyself
Deeply hast stamped on my soul,
Till on the writing eternal the School has im-
printed its signet,
And in a Formula's bond
Fettered the volatile soul ?

Tell me, for into those intricate depths thou
 once hast descended,
Out of the mouldering grave,
 Strongly upholden, returned ;
Known is to thee, what the tomb conceals of
 mysterious import ;
If, with the mummies there dwells
 Comfort for those who still live ?
Tread too must I that nocturnal path ?—it is
 fearful—I know it !
But yet tread it I will,
 Leads it to virtue and truth.
Friend, thou hast heard of the golden age, for
 many a poet
Much that is childlike thereof,
 Much that is touching has sung :
That blest age, when through every-day life still
 wandered the holy,
Still every feeling was kept
 Modest and maidenly pure ;
When that omnipotent law, which careers in the
 sun's rapid orbit,
And, concealed in the egg,
 Stirs in the vibrating point,
That calm law of necessity, equable, constant, 
 and silent,
Over the bosom of man
 Rolled in a healthier tide ;

When, still unerring, the sense, and true as the
 hand on the dial,
 Pointed alone to the right—
 Towards the eternal alone.
Then no profane one was known—no initiation
 was needed;
 What to be living was felt,
 Never was sought with the dead.
Equally clear to everyone's heart was the precept
 eternal :
 Equally hidden the spring
 Whence flowed the life-giving stream.
But it is gone, that happier time ! presumptuous
 self-will
 Has with its heavenly peace
 Genuine nature destroyed ;
Feeling profaned as the voice of the gods is no
 longer regarded,
 In the polluted breast
 Now is the oracle dumb ;
Only in still self-thought can the listening spirit
 perceive it,
 Finding the holier sense
 Hid in the mystical word.
Nature forsaken, so sought, the earnest inquirer
 will answer,
 And to the single in heart
 Give back the wisdom he seeks.

Hast thou, O happy one, never thy guardian
angel deserted?

Is in thine undimmed eye
Clearly depicted the truth?

Hast thou thine holier instinct's affectionate warning
not slighted,

Sounds in thy child-like breast
Plain and decisive her call?

Is the rebellious doubt in thy satisfied bosom
quiescent?

As it is silent to-day,
So will it always remain?

Will in the strife of the feelings sometimes
not a judge be demanded,

And the deceitful heart
Trouble the questioning mind?

O then go! go forth in thy priceless innocence!
—Science

Nothing to thee can teach:—

Science must learn it of thee!

Law, which a struggler must lead with a staff of
hard iron, thou need'st not:

All that thou likest and do'st,
That to thyself is a Law.

Words of divinest power shalt thou utter for all
generations;

All that thine hand shall have formed,
All that shall fall from thy lip,

Holy shall be, and mightily move and astonish
the senses:

Thou only mark'st not the God

Who in thy bosom resides :

Thou only know'st not the power of the Ring
which compels every spirit:

Simple thou goest, and calm,

Though thou hast conquered a world.





PROVERB OF CONFUCIUS.

1795.

THREEFOLD is the march of time,
Lingering comes the future on,
Swift as arrow flies the present,
Still for ever stands the gone.

No impatience, no entreaty,
Wings the Lingerer on his way ;
No despair, no cry for pity,
Wins the Fugitive to stay ;
No conjuring, no repentance
Moves the Still to change his sentence.

Would'st thou calmly onward wend,
Wise and blest life's journey end,
The Lingerer for counsel take,
But not thy instrument to make ;
Nor friendship on the Fugitive bestow ;
Nor make the Motionless thy foe.



THE VEILED STATUE OF SAIS.

1795.

A YOUTH whom burning thirst of science drove
To the Egyptian Sais, from its Priests
To learn their hidden wisdom, soon had passed,
Endowed with rare intelligence and zeal,
O'er many a step of learning : but a mind
Inquisitive and eager craved for more ;
And scarcely could his priestly guide rein in
The boy's impatient soul.—“ What have I learned
If aught remains to learn ? ”—exclaims the youth ;
“ Is there a question here of less or more ?
And is thy truth but like the senses' bliss,
A sum, of which a fraction we may have,
Greater or smaller, — but yet only part ?
Is it not then an indivisible whole ?
Take from the harmony one single tone ;
Take but one colour from the heavenly bow,
All that remains is nothing : not one tint,
One tone must fail us in the beauteous all.”

Whilst thus in serious mood they converse held,
Within a lone rotunda's silent pale,
A statue of colossal size, and veiled,
Struck the young scholar's gaze. Towards his guide
He wondering turned—"And what is that?" he
said:

"What is behind this veil concealed?"—"The
Truth,"

Replied the teacher. "Truth!"—the other cried,
"Truth is the single end for which I strive;
And is it over that you cast a veil?"

"That must you settle with the Deity,"

Replied the Hierophant—"No mortal man"—
says she,

"Must lift this veil till by myself withdrawn:

And who with guilty sacrilegious hand

The holy—the forbidden—sooner lifts,

He"—says the Deity—"Well!"—"He sees the
Truth."

"A strange oracular response!—And thou!

Hast thou thyself the veil ne'er yet withdrawn?"—

"Most surely not; nor ever so to do

Was tempted."—"That I cannot comprehend!

This thin partition only"—"And a Law"—

Breaks in his guide—"Far heavier than thou
think'st

Is this thin gauze : light to thy hand, my son !
But on thy conscience it would weigh like lead."

Plunged in deep thought the youth his home re-
gained,

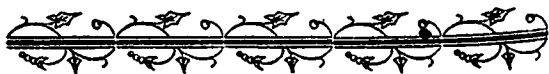
A passionate desire for knowing more
Robbed him of sleep. Upon his bed he lay
Tossing his fevered limbs, and knew no rest :
At midnight up he starts and rushes forth.
With timid but involuntary steps
He turns towards the temple. Easy task
For him it is, and short, the bounding wall
To overleap : one bold and vigorous spring
Places the daring youth within the pale.

Here stands he still, with speechless terror seized,
For naught that lives around the Lonely-one
Breaks the dread silence, save the hollow tread
Of his own footsteps o'er the vaulted graves.
Through the high windows of the cupola
The moon a silver-blue pale light sends down ;
And awful as a present Deity,
Gleaming athwart the darkness of the dome,
Stands, robed in her long veil, the statue there.

He steps towards it with uncertain steps :
About to touch with an audacious hand
The sacred Image, hot and cold in turn,

A sudden shuddering strikes through all his frame
Even to his very bones, and something seems
With an invisible arm to push him back.
“Unhappy youth! what would thou do?” so calls
A faithful voice within—“the All-Holy one
Wilt thou thus dare to tempt?—No mortal man,”
Declared the Oracle, “shall lift the veil,
Till I myself shall lift it!”—“But did not
The self-same Oracle this add thereto?
He who shall lift this veil shall see the Truth?
Be what there will behind”—he shouts aloud—
“I’ll lift it up:—the Truth I will behold!”
A long derisive echo cries—“Behold”!
He spoke and raised it.—Ask you what he saw?
I cannot tell you.—At the statue’s base
Next morn the Priests of Isis found him stretched
Senseless and pale.—Life’s cheerfulness was gone!
For ever brooding o’er his secret grief
He pined—and sank into an early grave.
To him who questioned him too pressingly,
This the sole warning answer—“Woe! to him,
Who Truth would search for in the ways of sin!
On him shall never rest her radiant smile!”





THE SOWER.

1795.

SEE! how the golden seed, full of hope, to the earth
thou confidest,
Trusting in spring to behold,
Joyful, the promising germ :
Dost thou bethink thee Deeds in the furrows of life to
deposit,
Which, in wise providence sown,
Shall for eternity bloom ?





THE PUPPET SHOW.

1796.

Come, Masters, at my puppets look ;
A little world—life's mimic game
Will to your eyes appear the same ;
But gaze too near they will not brook,
And only by Love's dazzling glow,
And Cupid's torch their wonders show.

Behold ! the stage is never clear :
The infant in the arms is here,
There skips the boy, the youth with passion rages,
The man dares all, and war with hardship wages.

All their adventurous fortune try ;
Though small the course with ease to turn,
The chariots roll, the axles burn,
The bold rush on, the weaker fly,
The proud 'midst peals of laughter fall,
The prudent bear the prize from all.

With smiling lips, and gestures bland,
Fair maidens near the barrier stand,
To crown the victor with a lovely hand.



EXPECTATION.

1796.



DID I not hear the wicket stirring ?
Was not a bolt withdrawn ?
No ! 'twas but the breezes whirring
Through the poplars on the lawn.

Adorn thyself, thou green and leafy seat,
For her who from her presence beams delight !
Build her, ye branches, an embowered retreat,
To screen her when she comes with gentle night !
Awake, ye zephyrs all, her form to greet,
And fan her rosy cheek with pinions light,
Whilst her soft footsteps bear with quiet grace
Their lovely burthen to Love's trysting place !

List ! what is it that glides through the bushes,
— Rustling with hurrying pace ?
No ! 'tis but a bird that rushes
Scared from its resting-place.

Day, bid thy flaring brightness disappear !
 Come, shadowy Night, with calm and silent rays !
 Beneath us spread a purple carpet here,
 And twine thy branches round in mystic maze.
 Love's quiet pleasure flies the listener's ear,
 It flies the garish noon-tide's prying gaze :
 'Hesper, the silent one with tranquil eye,
 Alone may come, a trusty witness, nigh.

What sound comes soft to the ear,
 Like a whispering voice from the brake ?
 No ! 'tis only the swan which I hear,
 Circling the round of the silver lake.

Within mine ear a flow of music is,
 With pleasant murmur falls the babbling stream,
 The night-flower bends to meet the west-wind's kiss,
 All things to interchange glad greetings seem ;
 The peach and grape invite to share the bliss,
 And ripely swelling through the foliage gleam ;
 The air, bathed in an aromatic flood,
 Drinks from my glowing cheek the feverish blood.

Does not a footstep hither wander,
 Rustling along the leafy walk ?
 No ! 'twas but the ripe fruit yonder,
 Which fell from the laden stalk.

The flaming orb dies gently on the sight,

Its lovely colours pale in sober grey ;

Bold open to the balmy darkening night.

The fragrant cups that hate the glow of day ;

The quiet moon uplifts her silvery light,

The world in grand still masses melts away ;

And Nature, throwing off her splendid dress,

Presents her charms in naked loveliness.

Do I not see something white advancing,

Like glistening silk, to my view ?

No ! 'tis but the moonlight glancing

From column to dark green yew.

O yearning heart, amuse thyself no more,

Nor with vain lovely shapes thy fancy fool !

Void are the arms which her embrace implore,

No shadowy bliss can this fond bosom cool.

Oh ! to my arms the living form restore !

Oh ! let her gentle hand these throbbings lull !

Let but her garment's hem before me stream,

And into life shall start this empty dream.

And softly as Spirits which hover

Above in fair regions of bliss,

Unnoticed she comes to her lover,

And awakens him with a kiss.



" THE PARTITION OF THE EARTH.

1796.



"THERE! take the earth," said Jove, from his high throne,

To man, "henceforth the charge I will resign :
To you I give it ; take it for your own,
But brotherly to each his share assign."

Then hurried old and young their lots to gain,
And each was busy soon to choose his place :
The Husbandman sought out the fertile plain ;
The Noble's son strong keep and wooded chase ;

The Merchant chose the mart and ocean broad ;
The Abbot, hills that yield the generous wine
The King, the land the bridges and the road,
Exclaiming—" Taxes, tolls, and tithe are mine."

At last—when all was done—the Poet came
With loitering step from his far-circling round,
But naught was left to satisfy his claim,
For all ere this had lord and master found.

“Ah! woe is me! am I of all, am I
Alone forgotten?—I—his truest son?”
Exclaimed the Bard with loud and piteous cry,
And threw himself in tears before Jove’s throne.

“If thou in dream-land hast thyself forgot,”
Replied the God, “why angry be with me?
Where wast thou when each came to choose his lot?”
“Where,” said the Poet—“where?—I was with
thee.

“Mine eye was fixed upon thy glorious sight;
Thine heavenly harmony entranced mine ear;
Excuse the soul, which, with excess of light
Dazzled, the earth forgot, and went not near!”

“How now!” said Jove, “the earth is given away;
No longer is mart, field, or forest mine;
But dost thou choose with me in heaven to stay,
Come when thou wilt!—free entrance shall be
thine.”



THE LAMENT OF CERES.

1796.

Is SWEET Spring her flowers preparing ?
Comes to Earth her youth again ?
Sunny hills fresh green are wearing ;
Waters break their icy chain ;
On the stream's blue mirror brightly
Laughs Jove's unbecclouded brow,
Zephyr's wings are quivering lightly ;
Buds burst forth from each young bough ;
Every grove with songs is ringing,
But the Oread murmuring sighs :
" Yes ! thy flowers are round thee springing,
But no daughter glads thine eyes ! "

Ah ! how long—how long—I've sorrowing
Searched through every lonely spot !
All his beams from Titan borrowing,
But the loved one found I not !

Naught to my sad sight revealeth
 Where is hid that darling face ;
 And the Day, who naught concealeth,
 Of the lost hath found no trace.
 Hast thou, Jove, thou, from me torn her ?
 Hast thou, ravished with her charms,
 O'er thy darksome river borne her,
 Hades, in thine hateful arms ?

Who my tale of grief will carry
 To that lone and dismal shore ?
 Never doth the Boatman tarry,
 But save Shades none takes he o'er.
 To the Blessed closed for ever
 Lies that dark nocturnal land ;
 Long as Styx hath flowed, reached never
 Living Form its further strand.
 Downward lead a thousand traces,
 Not one upwards to the day ;
 To the mother's fond embraces
 None the vanished child convey.

Mothers born of Pyrrha's daughters,
 Mortal born—a fate more mild !—
 They can cross the gloomy waters,
 Following a beloved child :

Only those who pass Jove's portals
May not touch that dreary strand,
Only them—the blest immortals—
Parcæ, spare your rigid hand.
Down to Night's dread horrors drive me,
Banished from heaven's golden hall!
Of my Goddess-rights deprive me!
Ah! the mother they appal!

Where, with her dark spouse presiding
Throned she sits with joyless mien,
In with the light Shadows gliding,
Softly I approach the Queen.
Ah! her-tearful eye she raises
Vainly towards the golden sphere,
On the distance fondly gazes,
Me beholds not standing near:
Till, its joy no more concealing,
Heart to heart responsive leaps,
And with sympathetic feeling
Even the rugged Orcus weeps.

Idle wish!—ah! vain endeavour!
Circling in its ancient groove
Onward rolls Day's chariot ever:
Naught Jove's steadfast will can move.

Far from yonder desolation
Turns he his blest eyes away ;
Prisoner midst the gloomy nation,
Lost to me, she there must stay,
Till the dreary region quiver
With Aurora's roseate glow,
And across the infernal river
Iris bend her beauteous bow.

And is naught of her remaining ?
Not one sweet connecting band
Distant loved-ones still detaining ?
Not one pledge from that dear hand ?
Is each old and sweet love-token
'Twixt the child and mother fled ?
Is there left no tie unbroken
'Twixt the living and the dead ?
No ! they have not quite bereft us !
No ! we need not wholly part !
Still the gracious Gods have left us
Signs which speak from heart to heart.

When Spring's children all are dying
In the Winter's icy air ;
Flower and leaf are withered lying,
And the shrub stands stiff and bare,

Then the highest life-germ taking
From Vertumnus' copious horn,
And to Styx an offering making
Of the Harvest's golden corn,
Deep in earth I lay it sorrowing
Nearest to my daughter's heart,
Thence a speaking symbol borrowing,
Answering my sad bosom's smart.

Lo ! Spring comes, with joyous dances
Led on by the smiling Hours,
And the Sun's life-giving glances
Wake from death the sleeping flowers ;
Germes which to the eye seemed blighted,
Whilst in earth's cold lap they lay,
Struggling free themselves delighted,
And their glorious tints display :
Is the stem to heaven uprising,
Shyly creeps the root towards night,
Fostering care alike desiring
From dark Styx and Æther bright.

Half they border on the living,
Half above the dead repose,
From the realms sweet tidings giving
Where the dark Cocytus flows.

Though the Monarch may withhold her,
Prisoner in his dungeons drear,
In Spring's first-fruits I infold her,
Still from her sweet lips can hear,
That where, from heaven's golden splendour
Far, the Shades dejected go,
Hearts still beat, and bosoms tender
Still with warm affections glow.

Children of the mead, I hail you !
May each year your youth renew !
Ne'er, to fill your cups, shall fail you
Nectar of the purest dew :
In the loveliest tints I'll dye you
That the bow of Iris shows ;
With such glowing hues supply you,
As Aurora only knows.
In the Spring's resplendent glory,
In the Autumn's faded leaf,
Each soft soul shall read the story
Of my joys and of my grief.





THE BARD OF THE OLDEN TIME.

1796.

WHERE are they gone, the illustrious men, the bards
Of ancient times, who with the living word
Of listening nations won the enraptured ear ?
Who sang of men to gods, of gods to men,
And upward bore the soul on wings of song ?
They still survive—the bards—but deeds, alas !
Are wanting to awake the joyful lyre ;
Alas ! the ear to hear is wanting too !
Ye happy poets of the happy world,
From mouth to mouth flew on, from race to race,
Your heartfelt words ! As man receives the gods,
So each with pious reverence received
All that creative genius thought and spoke.
The listener kindled at the glow of song ;
The poet at his ardour fed the glow ;

Fed it and purified. Thrice happy man !
To whom was echoed back the soul of song
Fresh from the people's voice to whom in life,
In outward visible life, was clearly shown
The heavenly Godhead, which the later bard
Even in his inmost heart but dimly feels.





DITHYRAMB.

1796.



NEVER, believe me,
Never the Deities
Singly appear !

Comes jolly Bacchus, our troubles beguiling,
Comes with him Cupid, the Boy blandly smiling,
Phœbus, the lordly, too, comes in the rear :

They gather, come nigher,
Are here—the Immortals,
Even of earthly house
Crowding the portals.

How can I, son of earth,
Welcome befittingly
Sons of the sky !

What can I offer them worth their receiving ?
Bear me, ye Gods, this lowly earth leaving,
Bear to your blessed Olympus on high !

Joy is found only
In Jupiter's dwelling :
Oh ! give me the nectar
All sorrow dispelling.

Give him the nectar,
Reach to the Poet,
Hebe, thy wine !

Purge thou his eyes with heaven's dewdrops, that
longer

Styx they perceive not, the hateful—and stronger
Pierce, like our own, into secrets divine !

It purleth, it sparkles,
The bowl mantles brightly,
The eye now sees clearly
The bosom beats lightly !





THE MAIDEN FROM THE STRANGER.

1796.

WITHIN a vale, poor hinds among,
With each fresh year in flowers arrayed,
Soon as was heard the lark's first song,
Appeared a young and wondrous Maid.

She was not born of that rude race,
And whence she came was none who knew,
And lost of her was every trace,
Soon as her presence she withdrew.

Her coming seemed each soul to bless,
And send more brightness to each eye,
Whilst yet a certain loftiness
Repelled familiarity.

All kinds of fruits and flowers she brought
From lands, which richer produce bore;
In warmer sun-lit climates sought,
Matured upon some happier shore.

Without a gift none from her went,
Each one a flower or fruitage got,
Or young, or old with weakness bent,
And turned contented to his cot.

A cordial welcome had each guest,
But when approached a loving pair,
To them she offered 'of her best,
On them bestowed the largest share.





THE SECRET.

1797.



SHE could not say one little word,
Too many a listener's ear was nigh,
But shyly I the face explored,
And understood the speaking eye :
And now to thee I lightly steal,
Fair Beech, for love pavilion meet ;
Oh ! from the prying world conceal
The lovers in thy green retreat !

From far discordant murmurs come,
That tell of day's relentless toil ;
And midst the restless hollow hum
I hear the ponderous hammer toil :
So man his scanty pittance rends
From cruel fate with bitter strife,
Whilst free from Heaven's own lap descends
The easy lot that gladdens life.

Oh ! let the bustling crowd forbear
To ask how blest love's quiet joy !
They love no joy they cannot share,
And only would the bliss destroy.
The envious world will never brook,
The boon its sterner fate denies ;
Quick ! ere it cast its withering look,
Quick must thou snatch, or steal the prize !

Joy loves on tip-tœe step to glide
'Midst silence and the stilly night ;
But, once the traitor's eye espied,
She heavenward wings her hasty flight.
Pour from thy urn, thou gentle spring,
In broader stream come sweeping by,
Thy threatening waves around us fling,
And guard this holy sanctuary !





CANADIAN DEATH-SONG.

1797.

THERE he sits upon his mat,
There he sits upright,
All erect as once he sat,
Whilst he saw the light.
But where is the sinewy gripe,
Where the breath which late
To the Great Spirit smoked the pipe
'Midst the grave debate?
Where the eye, which, eagle-bright,
As the reindeer flew,
Tracked o'er waving grass its flight,
And the sparkling dew?
Where the limbs so swift to dart
O'er the frozen snow,
When he chased the lusty hart,
Or the mountain roe?

Where the arms of strength alone
To bend his stubborn bow ?
See ! the life is from them flown,
Nerveless hang they now !
Well for him ! he joyful strays
Where it no more snows,
Where self-sown the copious maize
Tall and heavy grows ;
Where with birds the thickets teem,
And with game the brake,
Silvery fishes fill each stream,
Teem in every lake.
With the souls on high he feeds,
Leaves us here alone,
To rehearse his noble deeds,
O'er his grave to moan.
Bring the last gifts to the brave,
Raise the funeral song,
All be buried in his grave,
That can joy prolong.
'Neath his head the hatchet lay,
Never known to spare ;
And to cheer his weary way
Haunches of the bear.
Add the nicely sharpened knife,
That with dexterous blow.

Whilst he sternly yielded life,
Scalped the prostrate foe.
Colours, too, that redly gleam,
Place within his hand;
Let him with full glory beam
In the spirit-land !





HOPE.

1797.

MAN talks and dreams, that Time will unroll
A happier day than the days which are gone,
And his steps to that golden, that hope-beaming goal,
Unfaltering, unflagging, he still presses on :
The world keeps circling the self-same sphere,
Yet man still hopes that the BETTER is near.

Hope welcomes the infant with radiant smiles,
She plays round the frolicsome, light-hearted boy,
The youth with her magic enchantment beguiles,
Nor can age every pleasing illusion destroy ;
For when in the grave the weary one lies,
He plants on the grave :—“ Hope lives in the skies.”*

Nor is this the fair dream, unsubstantial and vain,
The fruit of a brain with wild fancies elate :
The heart from within echoes loudly again,
We are born for some better and happier state :
And the inner voice, which bids us believe,
Will never the hoping spirit deceive.



THE KNIGHT OF TOGGENBURG.

1797.



“KNIGHT, a sister’s fond affection
Pledges you this heart,
Ask no other love, for this
Has caused too deep a smart ;
Calm would I appear before you,
Calmly bid you go,
But I cannot bear to see
That tearful silent woe ! ”

Mute he hears the sentence which
His very heart’s-core wrings,
Strains her wildly in his arms,
And on his charger springs ;
Sends from Switzerland to summon
All his faithful band,
Signed with the Red-Cross they journey
Towards the Holy Land.

Every form of toil and danger
There the warriors braved,
Where the battle thickest swarmed
Their crests and banners waved;
And the Toggenburger's name
Affrights the Moslem foe,
But no balm can find his heart
To cure its heavy woe.

Twelve long months he bears his grief,
But can no longer bear;
Win again his peace he cannot,
And forsakes the war;
Sees with swelling sails a vessel
Nigh to Joppa's strand,
Hastes to breathe the air she breathes
Within her own dear land.

Soon the Pilgrim knocking stands
Before her castle gate,
Ah! it opens but to hear
The thunder-words of fate:
"Whom you seek the veil has taken,
Is the bride of Heaven;
Yesterday the vow that bound her
To her God was given."

Then he leaves for evermore
The Castle of his sires,
Nor to look upon his arms,
Nor trusty horse desires,
But from Toggenburg in silence
Turns unknown away,
Garments of the coarsest hair
His noble limbs array.

And a little hut he builds him
Near the convent's bound,
Whence he sees the convent peering
Through the lindens round ;
From the earliest dawn of morning
Till the night-star shone,
Quiet hope his looks portraying,
There he sat alone.

Sat alone, and whole hours long
He watched and never stirred,
Watched her casement till the casement's
Clinking jar he heard.
Till the lovely form appearing
All his care beguiled,
Down the vale her face inclining
Calm and angel-mild.

Then he laid him down contented
By the vision cheered,
Joying with a silent joy
Till morn again appeared ;
And so many a day and year
He sat and never stirred,
Waiting mute and uncomplaining
Till the click he heard ;

Till the lovely form appearing
All his care beguiled,
Down the vale her face inclining,
Calm and angel-mild :
And so sat he till one morn
The stiffened corse they found,
Still its placid look directed
Towards the convent's bound.





LIGHT AND WARMTH.

1797.

THE youth with noble thoughts possest
Begins his bright career :
He trusts the hopes that swell his breast
Without a doubt or fear,
And gives, with generous ardour warm,
To Truth his firm and faithful arm.

But all appears so mean and base,
When nearer seen and tried,
He hastes to join the eager chase
And for himself provide,
And shuts his heart in cold repose
To gentle love and human woes.

Not always does Truth's splendid ray
A kindred glow impart ;
And well for those who do not pay
For knowledge with the heart !
Join thou, the happy mark to hit,—
The enthusiast's warmth, the worldling's wit.



THE WORDS OF FAITH.

.. 1797.

—: o :—

THREE words I name you of meaning profound ;
Let them circle from tongue to tongue !
But never without will their lineage be found,
From the depths of the heart they have sprung :
And man will have lost every title to worth,
When those words are no longer believed upon earth.

THAT MAN WAS CREATED FREE ;—is free,
Though even in chains he be born !
Be thy faith undisturbed the misdeeds though thou see
Of the mob by mad passion torn !
Before the slave, when he breaks his chain,
Before the free man your terrors are vain.

And VIRTUE—it is not an empty sound !
'Tis an object towards which we may strain ;
And, though often he trip on the slippery ground,
Man the heavenly image may gain ;
And what none of the wise in his wisdom sees,
A child-like spirit will grasp with ease.

AND THERE LIVES A GOD ;—a holy will !
Tho' man's waver, and come to naught,
High over all space and all time broods—still
And thoughtful—the highest thought ;
And, though all through eternal variety range,
A tranquil spirit presides o'er each change.

GUARD WELL THESE THREE WORDS—of meaning profound ;

Abroad by each tongue be they sown !
And though never without will their lineage be found,
Your hearts will respond to their tone :
And never will man be deprived of all worth,
SO LONG AS THESE WORDS ARE BELIEVED UPON EARTH.





THE RING OF POLYCRATES.

A BALLAD.—1797.

HE stood upon his castle's height,
And downward gazed with vast delight
On Samos' subjugated state;
And said: "All these my rule obey;
O King of Egypt! canst thou say
That I am not most fortunate?"

"The Gods, no doubt, to thee are good!
Those who erewhile thine equals stood
Now bend beneath thy sovereign will;
But one still lives to avenge their fate,
Nor dare I call thee fortunate,
Whilst one foe's eyes are watching still.

And ere the King his words had spent,
Came one who, from Miletus sent,
Brought to the tyrant tidings fair :
“Let. sir, thine altars incense breathe,
And in triumphant guise enwreath
Victorious laurels with thine hair.

“Thy foe hath sunk beneath thy spear,
And me hath sent thine heart to cheer
Thy faithful General Polydor ;”
And shows them, to their mutual dread,
In a black vase a well-known head,
Besmeared with gouts of recent gore.

The King stepped back in horror great ;
“Yet still I warn thee trust not fate,”
He whispered forth with anxious lips :
“Bethink thee of the faithless waves !
And, when the angry tempest raves,
How soon they crush the stoutest ships !”

But ere the words were spoken out,
Was heard a loud and joyous shout
Of triumph from the crowded shore ;
And freighted with its precious load,
The many-masted navy rode
Within its native bay once more.

The royal guest confounded stood :

“Thy fortune smiles in gracious mood,

Yet still its fickleness I fear ;

Well tried in arms, the Cretan bands

Are up, and threat thy peaceful lands,

And even now their fleet is near.”

But ere the words had passed his lips,

Comes one fast running from the ships,

And thousand voices shout afar ;—

“ Their ships the storm has scattered wide,

Or whelmed beneath the angry tide,

And ended is the Cretan war !”

The guest with terror hears : “ Thy state

I needs must call it fortunate ;

But dread the more its end to scan,

Lest envious Gods thy bliss destroy ;

For never yet was unmixed joy

A boon bestowed on mortal man.

“ I, too, a prosperous course have run,

In all my deeds of kingship done,

Heaven’s grace hath favoured still my state ;

But once a dear-loved heir had I,

God took him hence—I saw him die—

And so redeemed my debt to Fate.

“ And thou, wouldst thou avoid its frown,
Before the unseen powers bow down,
And them beseech some woe to send !
For never have I seen, to whom
The Gods with hands aye full have come,
Who e’er enjoyed a peaceful end.

“ And if the Gods no sorrow send,
Follow the counsel of a friend,
Inflict upon thyself the woe ;
And what thou prizest at most worth,
Of all thy treasures, bring it forth,
And to the depths of ocean throw.”

Then said the other, moved with fear :
“ Of all my treasures gathered here,
This ring I deem my greatest good ;
To expiate my present bliss,
To the Erinnyes give I this,
And cast it to the deep, deep sea.”

And in the morning’s dawning light,
A fisherman, with face all bright,
Stepped in, and stood before the King :
“ My lord, a fish, such as ne’er yet
Men’s eyes beheld, hath blessed my net,
Which as a gift I’ve dared to bring.”

But when the cook the fish divides,
He hastens back with hurried strides,
Exclaiming, with astonished mien :
“ The ring which on thy hand I saw,
I found it in the fish’s maw,
Sure, luck like thine was never seen ! ”

The guest in terror turns away :
“ With thee I may no longer stay,
My friend thou never more canst be,
The Gods thy ruin meditate,
To stay were but to share thy fate : ” —
He said, and shipped across the sea.

The legend on which Schiller’s Poem is founded is told graphically, and almost in the same words, by Herodotus, in the 40th and following sections of the 3rd book of his history, “ *Thalia*.”





FELICITY.

1798.

BLEST whom the gods, the gracious gods, have loved
Even ere his birth ; whom Venus as a child
Has cradled in her arms, whose opening eyes
Phœbus has touched with light, whose opening lips
Hermes with eloquence, and on whose brow
Great Jove himself has stamped the seal of power !
A noble lot is his, a lot divine !
Before the strife begins, behold his brows
Already crowned with bays ; before he lives,
The fulness of his life is measured out,
And rest before he knows what trouble is !
Great is the man who, his own architect,
Compels by strength of virtue even the Fates
To do his bidding ; but Felicity
He cannot so compel, nor what the Grace
Has enviously denied can striving win.

From base unworthy deeds with stern resolve
The will may guard thee ; but the highest gift
Must from the immortal gods come freshly down.
As Love comes in unbidden, so comes down
The heavenly boon, and Favour rules above
In Jove's domain, as here in Cupid's bowers.
The gods have their affections ; much they love
The curly locks of sportive childhood ; Joy
Delights to frolic with the joyous band.
Not by their presence is the gifted seer
Made happy ; to the blind alone 'tis given
To see the glory of their majesty.
The simple child-like soul they choose, and there,
In the pure vessel, keep the gift divine.
They enter unexpected, they deceive
The lofty hope, and vain is mortal power
To force them down, unwilling to attend.
Whom he prefers, to him the heavenly sire
Sends down his eagles, to Olympian heights
Bears him away, and, choosing whom he will
Amidst the multitude, with loving hand
Around the favoured mortal's brow he twines
Now the victorious laurel, now the bay :
But whomsoever the god selects to crown,
Felicity herself must crown the god.
Before the happy mortal leads the way
Phœbus the Pythian conqueror, and he,

Cupid, the laughing god, who conquers hearts.
Before him Neptune smooths the sea, and glides
Swiftly the vessel's keel that Cæsar bears
And his imperial fortunes. At his feet
The awful lion crouches ; and the depths
Of ocean leaving, tamed to his command
The rolling dolphin bows its patient neck.
Nor be thou angry at his happier fate,
To whom the gracious gods have thus assigned
An easy victory, whom from the fight
Venus has snatched in her protecting arms.
Him, the beloved of the immortal powers,
Him whom the laughter-loving queen preserves,
I envy ; not the man, whose gloomy front
With clouds she covers and the shades of night.
Less noble was Achilles, that his shield
Was forged by Vulcan, and the dreadful sword
That scattered desolation ?—that for him
A mortal man was all Olympus moved ?
No ! 'twas his greatest glory, that the gods
So loved him, and their favourite to exalt,
His wrath to honour, and enlarge his fame,
The best and bravest of the Grecian race
Down to the gloomy realms of Orcus cast.
Nor yet at beauty let thine anger rise,
That she is beautiful ; that by the grace
Of Venus, without merit of her own,

She blooms as doth the lily of the field :
If she is fortunate, not less art thou, . .
For thou behold'st her ; if without desert
She shines resplendent, thy delighted eye
The splendour sees. Rejoice thou, that the gift
Of song from heaven descended, that the bard
For thee has sung what him the Muses taught.
Because a God inspires him he becomes
A God unto his hearer ; if his lot
Be blessed, scarce less blessed too art thou.
With equal hand upon the busy mart
Let Justice poize her scale, and its reward
To labour be severely measured out ;
But happiness a god alone can call
To mortal cheeks, and where hath been performed
No miracle, no truly blest can be.
Each thing of earthly mould must first be born
And grow and ripen, and from strength to strength
The forming hand of Time must lead it on ;
The beautiful, the blest, thou wilt not see
So growing : perfect it steps forth at once
Out of the bosom of eternity.
Each earthly Venus, like the first of heaven,
Rises an indistinct and shapeless birth
From the illimitable ocean ; like
The first Minerva, in her ægis clad,
Leaps from the Thunderer's head each thought of light.



THE MAIDEN'S COMPLAINT.

1798.



The clouds are gathering,
 The oak-forests roar;
 The maiden sits

On the green of the shore :

The billows they break with might, with might;
 And she sighs aloud to the darksome night,
 Her tearful eye heavenward roving.

“The world is empty,

The heart is sore;

It cannot afford

A single hope more :

Thou, Holy One, call in thy heaven to live
 A child who has known all that earth can give,
 In living and loving.”

“The fountain of tears
Is opened in vain;
Complaint cannot waken
The dead again;

But tell me, the Heavenly One, what may give rest,
When love has forsaken the desolate breast;
Such comfort from me thou shalt borrow.”

“Oh! let my tears flow,
Though in vain they be shed;
Though vain my complaint,
For it wakes not the dead;
The sweetest relief that the sad heart can prove,
Next to tasting the raptures of heavenly love,
Are the memories of love and its sorrow.”





THE WORDS OF ILLUSION.

1799.



THREE words are uttered of meaning profound

By the lips of the noble and best,
But their echo is vain—an empty sound,
They can give neither comfort nor rest;
And man, by their shadowy image deceived,
So long of his life's fairest fruits is bereaved.

So long as he dreams of a golden hour,
When the right and the good shall prevail :
The right and the good wage strife with a Power,
Whose dominion will never fail :
And whose strength, unless in the sky subdued,
By the touch of earth will be ever renewed.

So long as he deems flattering Fortune will prove
To virtue a friend, or to worth :
She follows the evil with eye of love,
To the good man belongs not the earth ;
A stranger he is, he wanders away,
And seeks for a dwelling not moulded in clay.

So long as he deems that he e'er shall behold
The truth with his earthly eye ;
No mortal hand the veil hath unrolled,

We may only reason and try :
Thou wouldst prison the soul in a high decree,
But forth it will range like the tempest free.

Then thy soul from its fond illusions wean,
And the Heavenly Faith receive :
What no ear hath heard, what no eye hath seen,
The fair and the true believe !
It is not without thee—the fool seeks it there—
'Tis within; and in Act thou the blessing wilt share.





THE SONG OF THE BELL.

1799.

Vivos voco—mortuos plango—fulgura frango.

FIRMLY walled in well-burnt sand,
Stands the form, and modelled well :
Up, companions ! lend a hand !
Night must see the finished bell.
Burning from the brow
Must the hot sweat flow ;
Praise be to the master given,
But the blessing comes from Heaven.

A serious work when we prepare,
It surely merits serious care ;
And well the task may hope to speed,
Which counsels wisely ta'en precede.
Then what our feeble powers devise,
With calm reflection let us scan ;
That slavish drudge must all despise,
Who onward toils without a plan :

And this is man's distinguished pride,
His purpose well to understand,
That the deep inward thought may guide
The labours of the forming hand.

Fuel of the pine-wood bring,
Bring the fagots, but right-dry !
That the pressed-in flame may spring
Through the melting metal high :
Pour the copper in !
Quickly add the tin,
That the viscous mass may glow,
Duly mix, and rightly flow.

What now in the dark womb of earth
To fire's assistance owes its birth,
Shall high from yonder tower proclaim
The workman's skill, the master's name ;
Shall down descend to distant years,
And blend with many a hope and care,
Shall mingle with the mourner's tears,
And call the pious throng to prayer :
Whate'er his changing fate sends down
To mortal man of good or ill,
Shall echo from its brazen crown,
To teach the lesson wider still.

See ! white bubbles upwards spring :
Well ! the melting is begun !

Quick! the searching ashes bring,
And assist the mass to run.
Free from dross and scum
Must the mixture come,
That the bell may, deep and clear,
Burst sonorous on the ear.

That bell with festive sounds of mirth
Shall hail the darling infant's birth,
Which entering on its primal day
Unconscious sleeps the hours away.
As yet in Fate's dark lap repose
The cheerful lot, the darksome woes ;
A mother's tender cares and warnings
Watch o'er its childhood's golden mornings.
But years fly on with arrow-speed :
Wishes to wishes still succeed :
The youth, inflamed with generous pride,
Tears himself from the maiden's side,
A pilgrim through the world to roam ;
And burning for the eager strife,
Rushes to face the storm of life,
Then turns a stranger to his home.
Majestic in the bloom of youth,
An image fresh from heavenly lands,
With guileless looks of modest truth
The bashful maid before him stands.

Then nameless yearnings seize his soul,
To lonely shades he pensive hies,
Tears from his eyes unbidden roll,
His comrades' wild resorts he flies;
Blushing he seeks her every trace,
A single smile each act repays;
With fairest flowers her form to grace,
Unwearied through far fields he strays.
O gentle yearnings!—hopes so bright!
O golden hours!—too swift to fly!
Heaven opens on the ravished sight,
The heart swells high in extacy:
Oh! that those years were ever vernal!
Those primal days of love eternal!

See the vents already browned!
Bring the rod and plunge it in.
Is the surface glazed around?
Well! the casting may begin.
Comrades! pierce the clay,
And the ore assay:
Prove if hard and soft combine
To produce the perfect sign.

For where the hard and soft we find,
The gentle with the harsh combined,
To that the sweetest tones belong:

THE SONG OF THE BELL.

Then well reflect, ere heart to heart
Ye fetter—never more to part ;

Passion is short—repentance long.
Gaily float the virgin's tresses,

With the nuptial chaplet crowned,
Blithely forth the bridal presses,

And the merry bells ring round :
Ah ! that life's serenest morn

Closes, too, life's blooming May,
And that, veil and zone once torn,
Soon young passion hastes away.

The Illusion flies,

But Love may remain :
Though the blossom dies,
The fruit we obtain.

The man must abroad
Into turbulent life,
And tread its rough road,
And mix in its strife ;
Must plant and must plough
In the sweat of his brow ;
Must craftily watch
And eagerly snatch ;
Luck's favours to share
Must venture and dare ;

Till down the full tide of prosperity rains,
And his store-houses groan with the weight of his gains
His rooms he enlarges, his dwelling spreads wide ;
And the wife and the mother is busy inside,
And wisely her household rules and employs,
Teaching her daughters and watching her boys,
Whilst nimble and skilful her hands never cease
With orderly knowledge her stores to increase.
Her fragrant garners with treasures she spreads,
And twines with the whirring spindle her threads,
And fills her clean-polished presses full
With snow-white linen and glistening wool,
And brightens, and rubs, and busy for ever
She resteth never.

High on the roof, which wide commands
The smiling scene, the father stands;
With gladdened eye surveys his store,
And counts his blooming fortunes o'er ;
Sees his barns enlarge their size,
As the jutting roof-spars rise ;
Sees his granary's timbers bowed
Underneath their heavy load ;
Sees, wide-waving o'er the plain,
Yellow crops of ripened grain :
“ Sooner shall the solid rock,
Or the pillared earth decay,

Than before misfortune's shock

 This my prosperous house give way ! ”

Empty boast ! no mortal hand

Knits with fate such lasting band ;

Even now with hasty stride

Stands misfortune at his side.

Well ! the casting may proceed,

 Lovely 'shows the fractured ore ;

Yet, before the stream is freed,

 Heaven's protecting grace implore.

 Let the stopper go !

 God preserve from woe !

Smoking on the vaulted crown

Sweeps the fiery torrent down.

Benignant is the strength of fire,

When man is near to tame its ire :

Its heavenly power the aid imparts,

Which perfects all his noblest arts.

But fearful is that heavenly power,

If, seizing once the favouring hour,

Nature's free daughter bursts her chain,

And re-asserts her ancient reign.

Woe ! when, free'd from all command,

 Through the crowded street she flies,

Tosses high the flaming brand,

 And all human power defies :

For the elements with pride elate,
View the works of man with deadly hate.

From the cloud falls the rain,
Drops the dew that swells the grain ;
From the cloud with fitful crash
 The Forked Lightnings flash.
Hark, from the tower what means that ringing !
'Tis the fire bell wildly swinging !
 Over-head
 As blood 'tis red !
 Up ! away !
That is not the glow of day !
Hark in the street
What trampling of feet !
See the smoke ! 'tis fire indeed !
 Up the flickering columns go,
 Through the street's long row
Hurrying on with a whirlwind's speed !
 How they flare !
Like a furnace glows the air !
- Beams are splitting, rafters crashed,
Doorposts crackling, windows smashed ;
 Mothers wild
Rush to save a screaming child !
In the ruin beasts are moaning ;
All around is shrieking, groaning,

Flight, confusion, and dismay,
And the night is light as day.
Through the long connected band
Speeds the bucket, hand to hand,
And swift the well-plied engine throws
To heaven its spouting watery bows.
But the howling storm in ire
Comes to fan the roaring fire,
Till, with fresh-awakened rage,
Crackling to the roof it soars,
To the timbers dry with age,
To the granary's arid stores;
Fiercely sweeping on its prey
Bears the earth's increase away,
And, enlarged to giant size,
Mounts in triumph to the skies.

Man at length
Hopeless yields to heavenly strength;
Listless, and in mute amaze,
Gazes on the raging fire,
And in the victorious blaze
Sees his fairest works expire.

All that was a dwelling late
Is desolate!
The waste path of a wild storm,
Which rough heaps and wrecks deform!

In the windows void'and bare
Sits despair!
And through them gazes from on high
The sullen sky.

One look the father fixes sad
On the grave of all he had,
Then firmly grasps the pilgrim's stay,
And blithely wends him on his way.
Though great the comforts that are gone,
His greatest still remains in store;
He counts his darling children o'er,
And misses none.

See! the ore is lost to sight,
Vanished through the moulded clay!
Will it beauteous spring to light,
And our toil and skill repay?
Should the stream go wrong!
Should the form have sprung!
Ah! the hope in which we toiled
Perhaps even now mischance has foiled.

All that belongs to mortal deed
Must into earth's dark womb descend:
To earth the sower trusts his seed,
And hopes, if Heaven the blessing send,

To see a lovely harvest bloom :
In trust within the sacred gloom
More precious seed we mournful lay,
Hopeful to see it burst the tomb,
And blossom to a brighter day.

From the dome
With sullen boom,
Tolls the bell
The funeral knell :
Slowly its sad and solemn sounds attend
A wearied wanderer to his journey's end.

Ah ! 'tis she, beloved as life,
Faithful mother, tender wife,
Whom the gloomy tyrant's hand
Summons to his shadowy land.
From her loving husband torn,
From her children left forlorn
Whom she bore to him, when Time
Saw her in her blooming prime ;
Whom she to her gentle breast
With a mother's fondness prest,
Watched up-growing at her side
With a mother's love and pride.

Severed are those tender ties,
Naught their union can restore
To the spirit-world she hies,
Ne'er her house to govern more.
There they miss her faithful schooling ;
Yearn to meet a mother's face,
Whilst, the orphan-household ruling,
The unloving stranger fills her place.

Now the weary labour stay,
Whilst the metal cools in earth ;
Like the feathered songsters gay,
Snatch an hour for sportive mirth.
Stars with twinkling light,
Tell the approach of night :
Vespers sound, and labour closes,
But the master ne'er reposes.

Through the forest wild and wide
Cheerly now, with quickened stride,
Seeks the hind the distant spot
Whereon stands his much-loved cot ;
Homeward creep
The bleating sheep ;
And the sleek and broad-faced kine
Lowing come, in broken line,
Towards the farmstead's sheltering walls,
Filling the accustomed stalls.

Piled on high with ripened grain,
Slow toils on the tottering wain ;
On the sheaves the garlands lie,
Decked with flowers of varied dye ;
And the youthful reapers glance
Lightly through the mazy dance.
Silence sinks o'er mart and street,
And, the social flame surrounding,
Kind familiar faces meet ;
Till with jarring grate resounding,
The town-gate closes :
With sable pall
Night covers all,
And the weary man reposes.
But the night
Which wakes the bad to ghastly deeds,
And oft the work of evil speeds,
Does not the Burgher fright ;
Secure and free from fears he sleeps
For he knows that the Law its vigil keeps.

Sacred Order, born of Heaven,
Kindest friend to mortals given !
Who the social fabric founded,
And on steady basis grounded ;
Nature's rude untutored child
Summoned from the savage wild,

To the crowded city brought,
Gentler arts and manners taught,
And wove for us the dearest band,
The passion for our native land !

Thousands, each his ease resigning,
Mutual thought and aid impart,
And, a beauteous whole combining,
Perfect every noble art ;
Each in generous emulation,
Master—servant—dares with pride
Glory in his proper station,
And the laugh of scorn deride.
Labour well the burgher graces,
Blessings come as labour's due ;
Kings we honour in their places,
Give our labour honour too.

Lovely Peace—Union sweet,
Each the other fondly greet !
Stay, O stay, our dwellings nigh,
Bless our dear community !
May the day be distant far,
When the savage hordes of war,
And the horrid din of arms,
Shall scare this quiet vale with wild alarms !
When this sky, now softly streaming
With the evening's loveliest dyes,

Shall with lurid flames be gleaming,
That from blazing hamlets rise !

Break me down the solid mound !
Has it done its duty well ?
On the huge and perfect round
Heart and eye delighted dwell !
Swing the hammer, swing,
Till the crust shall spring !
Ere the bell can rise to day,
Must the mortal form decay.

The master knows the time to take
With prudent hand the form to break ;
But woe ! if spurning his decree
The glowing stream itself sets free ;
Careering with the voice of thunder,
Bursts fiercely from the riven ground,
Drives every obstacle asunder,
And spreads destruction flaming round :
Where rages senseless force, we trace
No form of order or of grace ;
When nations rise themselves to free,
There dream not of prosperity !

Woe to the town whose dark domains
The lighted match and train conceal.

When man vindictive bursts his chains,
And grasps the self-avenging steel!
Then, clashing with tremendous jar,
The bell proclaims the out-break far,
And, only made for sounds of gladness,
The signal peals to rage and madness.

Hark! the wild tumultuous cry,
—"Freedom and equality!"
To arms the frightened burghers start,
And crowd the hall, the street, the mart;
Plundering troops of fierce banditti
Desolate the weeping city;
Women their sex and nature change,
Like raging wolves by famine prest,
O'er heaps of slaughtered townsmen range,
And bathed in blood at murder jest.
Things sacred are no longer known,
And lust and rapine wander free,
The reign of justice is o'erthrown,
And burst all bonds of piety.
Fearful! when up the lion springs;
More fearful still the tiger's path;
But fearfulest of fearful things
Is man abandoned to his wrath!
Woe! then, to those, who midst the gloom
The torch of heavenly truth display!

It can not light—can but consume,
And towns and states in ashes lay.

Heaven success and joy has given !
See ! how like a golden star,
From its casing, clean and even,
Forth it comes and shines afar.
Like the sun's bright ray,
Rim and surface play ;
Shield and arms emblazoned fair,
Prove the experienced master's care.

Hurrah ! Hurrah !
Comrades, close in ! with joy elate
The bell baptise and consecrate ;
Its title be CONCORDIA :
And may its name and use agree ;
May it a sign of concord prove,
And bind in harmony and love
An ever-blest community !

And this, perchance, the high vocation
For which the master gave it birth !
In heaven's blue vault to take its station,
And vibrate o'er this lowly earth ;
Near to the thunder, rolling high,
And near the starry canopy,

Its sweet accordant voice to raise,
 Melodious as the murmuring spheres,
Which wandering their Creator praise,
 And onward lead the blooming years;
To serious and immortal things
 To consecrate its solemn chime;
And, as on high it hourly swings,
 Remind us of the march of time;
To give to destiny a voice,
 Soulless itself, and still the same,
Now bid us mourn, and now rejoice,
 And mark life's ever-changing game;
• And as its deep tones melt away,
 And die upon the breezes round,
To teach that all must soon decay,
 And earthly fame is empty sound.

Hither rope and pulleys bear!
 Raise the monarch from its grave,
In the azure realms of air
 O'er the subject earth to waive.
 Pull! it moves—it springs!
 Now it trembles—swings!
May it bid our joys increase,
And its earliest voice be—PEACE.



THE ANTIQUITIES AT PARIS.

1800.



WHAT the Grecian Art hath wrought
May the Frank, from battle-fought,
Carry to his native strand ;
And in halls, in splendour dight,
Show the trophies of his might,
To the astonished father-land.

Never will they silence break,
Ne'er their pedestals forsake,
Ne'er for him be living known !
Only have the Muses blest,
Who hath ta'en them to his breast ;
To the Vandal they are STONE.





THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CENTURY.

1801.

WHITHER, noble friend, hath Freedom wended ?
Whereto Peace to seek a refuge flown ?
Wrapped in storms the century gone hath ended ;
Red with carnage comes the new one on.

All the lands have rent their ties asunder,
All the ancient Forms their downfall sign ;
Not the Ocean stays the war-din's thunder,
Not the Nile-God, not the hoary Rhine.

Two proud nations, for the sole possession
Of the world, contest their battle-fields ;
Freedom's realm to curb with stern repression,
Each the trident and the lightning wields.

All must show their hoarded gold and pay it,
And, like Brennus in the rough old days,
Stands the Frank besides the scales to weigh it,
And therein his brazen falchion lays.

With his fleets the greedy Briton closes,
As his house, the ocean's wide domain ;
And, like some huge polypus, engrosses
All free Amphitrite's watery reign.

Where the seldom-seen south pole-star blazes,
On he presses still with restless mind ;
On each unknown coast and island gazes,
Paradise alone he cannot find.

Ah, in vain ye scan the chart, for never
Will ye see, alas ! that blessed shore,
Where fair Freedom's garden blooms for ever,
Where man's youthful beauty fades no more.

All the earth thy searching eye embraces,
Boldest ship can scarcely reach its bound :
Yet, in all its wide unmeasured spaces,
Room for scarce Ten happy souls is found !

In the bosom's holy still recesses
Must you flee from life's oppressive throng ;
Freedom's Form the dream-land only blesses,
Only blooms the Beautiful in song.



HERO AND LEANDER:

A BALLAD.—1801.



SEE'ST yon castles, time-worn hoary,
Gleaming in the golden glory
Of the sunshine front to front?
Where between the lofty gorges
Of the Dardanelles, its surges
Rolls the thundering Hellespont?
Hear'st the roar of deafening billows,
Breaking on the cliff's rough side?
Asia they have torn from Europe,
Faithful love could not divide!

Hero and Leander's anguish,
Doomed in tender pain to languish,
Love's almighty power confest;
Hero, fair as Hebe blooming,
He, midst wilds and mountains roaming,
Every manly grace possest:

But their fathers' cruel hatred
Far the plighted lovers drove,
And upon the brink of danger
Hung the tempting fruit of love.

Now on Sestos' rock-built castle,
Which the waves in ceaseless battle

Whiten with the dashing foam,
Sat the maiden, sad and lonely,
Gazing towards Abydos only,
Her beloved Leander's home.

Ah ! no bridge in friendly union
There the distant shores had bound,
Not a boat would leave the haven :
Dauntless love a passage found !

With sure thread the mazy places
Of the Labyrinth he traces,

Bids the coward boldly dare ;
Tames the savage tiger's wildness,
Soothes the fiery steer to mildness,

Yokes him to the iron share :
Even the Styx, the nine-times flowing,
Spreads its circling arms in vain ;
Boldly his beloved he seizes
Even in Pluto's drear domain.

He, midst darkly-rolling surges
Now Leander fiercely urges

Death with steadfast mind to brave :
Soon as evening's latest glimmer
Pales in night, the venturous swimmer

Plunges in the gloomy wave ;
Ploughs with vigorous arms the billows,
Striving towards the much-loved strand,
Where, from lofty turret streaming,
Flames the torch's guiding brand.

And his weary voyage closing,
And in her white arms reposing,

Happy he forgets all care ;
And the rich reward possesses
Which in tender soft caresses

Love's own heavenly hands prepare :
Till Aurora wakes the lingerer
From his dream of fond delights,
And, the sea's cold bed to lie on,
From the arms of love affrights.

Thirty suns their course had speeded
Thus in stolen joys unheeded ;

They had far too happy been !
Like the bridal night's soft hours,
Envied by the immortal powers,
Ever young and ever green :

Joy supreme he ne'er has tasted,
Who the golden fruit of bliss
Never snatched upon the dizzy
Verge of danger's dread abyss.

O'er the heavens in mutual changes
Hesper with Aurora ranges,
But they saw—the happy twain—
Nor the leaves of Autumn falling,
Nor approach with steps appalling
Winter from his drear domain :
Careless they beheld the morrow's
Ever shorter, shorter light ;
And the gods thanked in their folly
For the longer joys of night.

And, in even scale suspended,
Day with equal night contended ;
Posted on the rocky steep,
Watched the maid in shortened courses
Phœbus urge his flying horses
Downward to the gloomy deep :
Like a pure and polished mirror
Lay the still and level main ;
Not a zephyr's gentle breathing
Ruffled o'er its crystal plain.

Tribes of dolphins, glistening brightly,
Sported o'er the surface lightly

Of the calm and silvery flood ;
And from ocean's depths ascended,
Dark and grey in union blended,

Thetis' variegated brood :

They, the only ones permitted,
Witnessed love's sweet stolen band,
But their lips they sealed in silence,
Mute by Hecate's stern command.

And the scarcely-heaving ocean
She surveyed with pleased emotion,

And bespoke in flattering strain :

Lovely god ! art thou deceiving ?

No ! I hear them, unbelieving,

Who report thee false and vain !

False is all the race of mortals ;

Cruel is the father's heart ;

But thou, sure, art kind and gentle ;

Thou hast felt love's tender smart.

In these walls unknown to gladness

I had pined in cheerless sadness,

Mourning o'er my withering charms,

Hadst thou not my sorrow pitied,
And, when bridge nor boat permitted,
 Borne my lover to mine arms.
Dark and dread are thine abysses,
Fearful are thy waves to see !
But even thee Love saw a suppliant ;
Love, the Hero, conquered thee.

Yes ! even thee, the god of ocean,
Eros touched with soft emotion,
 When the Golden Fleece, thy bride
Helle, with her brother roaming,
In the pride of beauty blooming,
 Bore across thy briny tide.
Vanquished by her beauty, swiftly
Thou didst leave thy dusky waves,
Snatch her from the deck and bear her
Deep within thy ocean caves.

There a goddess, and requited
By thy love, she lives united
 Henceforth with the deathless band ;
Comforts hapless love's distresses,
Tames thy passion's wild excesses.
 Guides the mariner to land.

Lovely Helle ! gentle goddess !
Power benign, I pray to thee !
Bring once more to-day my lover
Safely o'er the accustomed sea.

And the waves are duskier growing,
And the torch she raises, glowing
 With its bright and friendly ray,
Flinging from the lofty station,
O'er the gloom and desolation,
 Light to cheer her wanderer's way.
And the wind moans in the distance,
Dark and curling waves appear,
And the lights of heaven are vanished.
And the heavy storm is near.

On the wider-sweeping current
Rushes night : a whelming torrent
 Pours down from the bursting sky ;
Lightnings gleam in fitful flashes,
From their caves with frequent crashes,
 All the prisoned tempests fly.
In the vexed and boiling ocean
Dreadful whirlpools, gulfs profound,
Like the infernal portal yawning,
Show beneath the solid ground.

Woe! ah, woe is me! almighty
Jove, she weeping cried, have pity!

Ah! what dared I ask of thee!
If the gods my prayers have granted!
If himself he now undaunted

Trusts to the tempestuous sea!
All the birds that love the ocean
Homewards speed with hasty flight;
All the strongest storm-tried vessels
Seek the nearest port in sight.

Yes! too surely has the daring
Youth adventured, undespairing!

Him pursues immortal hate!
These his words, when last we greeted,
He with vows of love repeated;

Vows at length absolved by fate!
Ah! perchance he at this moment
Struggles with the angry storm,
And the raging waves, o'erpowering,
Shroud his pale and breathless form.

Lying Pontus! thy smooth semblance
Was the traitor's false resemblance:

Like a mirror bright and plain,
All thy billows thou secured'st,
Till thou cunningly allured'st
Him to try thy faithless main;

Now when all thy streams surround him,
And return he never can,
Loose thou lettest all thy terrors,
Traitor ! on the wretched man.

And the tempest's wild commotion
Still increases, and the ocean
 Swells in billows mountains-high ;
O'er the cliffs the white foam lashes;
And the oak-ribbed vessel dashes
 On the rocks that ventures nigh ;
And the torch is quite extinguished,
Raised to guide him to the land ;
Horror covers all the waters,
Horror covers all the strand.

And she prays to Aphrodite
• To implore Orceanus, mighty
 To control the proud waves' scorn ;
To the potent winds a splendid
Gift she vows, the tempest ended,
 And a steer with golden horn ;
All the gods that sway the billows,
All that rule the azure plain,
She entreats to pour the assuaging
Oil into the storm-swept main.

Come ! from thy green bower ascending,
To my earnest cry attending,
 'Blest Leucothea ! goddess, hear !
Whom, amidst the desolation
Of the storm, with swift salvation
 Oft beholds the seaman near :
Haste and bring the sacred girdle
Woven in thy mystic loom,
Which uninjured all who bear it
Rescues from a watery tomb.

And each wilder wind reposes,
O'er the orient, scattering roses,
 Eos drives his steeds on high ;
Peacefully the stream subsiding
In its ancient bed is gliding ;
 Smiles serenely sea and sky :
Softer break the rippling wavelets
On the rock-protected strand,
And before them, gently playing,
Waft a corse towards the land.

Yes ! 'tis he ! who has not slighted,
Even in death, the vows he plighted ;
 One quick glance the truth commands ;
Not a single shriek expresses,
Not a tear, her deep distresses,
 Cold, despairing, there she stands !

Hopeless to the waste of waters
Looks she—to the ether's light,
And a glow of generous passion
Crimsons o'er her pallid sight.

Yes ! I know you now, too clearly,
Stern relentless Powers ; severely
 Have ye urged your rights divine :
Yet, though soon my course hath ended,
'Twas by happiness befriended,
 And the loveliest lot was mine :
Living I have in thy temple
Thy devoted priestess been ;
Thy glad sacrifice I perish,
Venus, high and mighty queen !

And the winged bird out-vying,
From the tower, with garments flying,
 Down she plunges in the wave ;
High the god his ocean raises,
Shrouds her in his dreary mazes,
 And himself becomes her grave ;
And contented with his plunder
Forward on his course he goes,
Pouring from his unexhausted
Urn a stream that ever flows.



YEARNINGS.

1801.



FROM this vale, where darkly hovering
Ever doubtful clouds I see,
Some kind outlet once discovering,
Ah ! how happy should I be !
Lovely hills are rising yonder,
In eternal verdure drest ;
Had I wings how soon I'd wander,
On those lovely hills to rest !

Tuneful voices there are singing
Notes that breathe of heaven's repose ;
Every gentle breeze is bringing
Balmier fragrance than of rose.
'Midst their darksome foliage glowing,
Golden fruits rejoice my sight ;
Flowers which, ever freshly blowing,
Fear no chilling winter's blight.

O how sweet to wander gaily
In perpetual sunshine there !
O how soothing to be daily
Fanned by that delicious air !
But the waters darkly heaving
Broad and deep between us roar,
All my soul of hope bereaving ;
And I dare not quit the shore.

“ And a little skiff is swimming,
But its idly fluttering sail
No kind boatman's hand is trimming
To a light propitious gale.
Faith must speed thee, boldness speed thee,
Or no god will lend a hand ;
Only heavenly power can lead thee
To that fair enchanted land !





THE FOUR AGES OF THE WORLD.

1802.



In the goblet bright sparkles the purple wine,
Bright glances the eye of each guest,
He enters—the Bard, the beloved of the nine,
To the good he contributes the best ;
For without the lyre in the heavenly hall
The joy were common, the nectar would pall.

To him has the purer spirit been given,
To mirror the eternal world ;
He all hath beholden in earth and in heaven,
And the future to him is unrolled ;
The eldest council of gods he saw,
And he listened to Nature's primeval law.

The folded canvas of life he takes,
And a glorious picture extends :
His earthly dwelling a temple he makes
Where in thanks to the Muses he bends ;
No roof is so lowly, no hut is so small,
But he fills it with heavenly guests at his call.

As with art divine on the shield's plain bound
The inventive descendant of Jove
Sculptured earth, and the ocean that girdles it round,
And the starry pavilion above,
So he on each moment that hastens to die
Impresses the stamp of eternity.

From the youthful age of the world he comes,
When man like an infant was gay ;
A joyous pilgrim its surface he roams,
All races and times to survey ;
Four generations already are gone,
And the fifth he beholds speeding silently on.

First ruled Father Saturn in justice and grace :
Then to-day as to-morrow was fair ;
Then lived the shepherds, an innocent race,
They lived without sorrow or care ;
They loved, and love was their only employ,
For the earth yielded all without pains or alloy.

Then labour came, and the Age of Might,
And the struggle with monsters began,
And tyrants to govern, and heroes to fight,
And the weak to the powerful ran ;
And the strife rolled over Scamander's plain,
But beauty was ever the goddess of men.

At length from contention the victory sprang:
And gentleness bloomed out of strife ;
And the Muses in heavenly harmony sang,
And god-like forms breathed into life :
The Age of Fancies divine is o'er,
It is vanished and gone—it returns no more.

From their temples the glorious columns were torn,
The gods from their thrones were hurled ;
And the holy Son of the Virgin was born,
To heal the sins of the world :
The lust of the senses was sternly repress,
And man dived thoughtful into his own breast.

And the sportive, the wanton illusions fled,
Which made the young world so bright ;
The monk and the nun with scourges bled,
And tilted the iron-clad knight :
But, though life became gloomy and dark and wild,
Love ever remained—still lovely and mild.

For the Muses nourished with holy care
An altar, in secret possest ;
And all that was generous, and noble, and fair,
Was cherished in woman's chaste breast ;
And the flame of song was kindled anew
By the mien so lovely, the love so true.

And therefore a soft and eternal band
Shall the bard and fair woman unite ;
They weave and embroider, hand in hand,
The zone of the lovely and right :
To Love and the Song, then, let glory be given ;
They exalt the earth to the semblance of heaven.





THEKLA :

A VOICE FROM THE SPIRIT-LAND.—1802.

This little poem is said to have been written in answer to an inquiry —“What becomes of Thekla?”—whose story is so beautifully told in the author's noble play of *Wallenstein*, translated by Mr. Coleridge, but whose fate is left in obscurity at the end of the piece. There is an allusion, too, to the *MAIDEN'S COMPLAINT* (see page 69), the two first verses of which are sung by Thekla at the end of the 6th Scene of 2nd Act, in the first part of the same play—the *Piccolomini*.

WHERE I am, and whither I retreated,
 When beyond the fatal scene removed?—
 Had I not my destined course completed?
 Had I not lived loving and beloved?

Dost thou ask me why to distant bowers
 Flies the Nightingale, whose thrilling lay
 Charmed thy listening ear in spring-tide hours?
 Where she might not love she would not stay!

Have I found my lost one?—Yes! united,
Trust me, now we dwell upon that shore,
Where is ne'er unloosed what once is plighted,
Where the parting tear is shed no more.

There ye, too, will find us in due season,
When your love to equal ours is found :
There my father lives absolved from treason,
And no murder taints that sacred ground.

And he feels 'twas no illusive treasure
Which he looked for in the starry sphere :
All shall have the measure that they measure ;
All by faith may bring the Holy near.

No false word or broken promise yonder
Shall the pure confiding soul betray ;
Dare in Fancy's realms to dream and ponder,—
Lofty sense lies oft in childish play.





CASSANDRA.

1802.

LOUD the joyous banquet sounded,
Ere Troy's lofty fortress fell ;
Hymns of triumph wide resounded,
Answering to the golden shell :
Every hand is stayed from slaughter,
All the tearful combat shun,
Whilst old Priam's lovely daughter
Weds with Thetis' god-like son.

And their brows with laurel binding,
Pour in crowds the festive bands,
Towards the holy temple winding,
Where the Thymbrian altar stands ;
Wild Bacchantes, frenzy-shaken,
Fill the streets with maddening cry,
And but one heaves, all-forsaken,
O'er her griefs the bitter sigh.

Cheerless in the midst of gladness,
Doomed companionless to rove,
Poor Cassandra, lost in sadness,
Roamed Apollo's laurel grove :
In the forest's deep recesses
Fled the hateful sounds of mirth,
And the wreath which bound her tresses
Dashed with angry scorn to earth.

" Joy is every heart beguiling,
None foresee what ills betide,
Hope is on the parents smiling,
And a sister is the bride.
Me alone the sweet seduction
Wins not to the festive halls,
For with winged step destruction
Hastens towards these destined walls.

" See ! a torch is yonder gleaming,
But 'tis not in Hymen's hand !
Towards the sky its flames are streaming, .
But 'tis not the sacred brand !
Songs I hear, and choral dancing,
But my sad presaging eyes
See the vengeful god advancing,
Sworn to break those golden ties.

“ And they censure my complaining,
And they scorn the piercing smart ;
In the desert’s gloom remaining,
Must I quell my sorrowing heart :
By the fortunate derided,
By the happy quite forgot,
Sternly has thy voice decided,
Pythian god, my cruel lot !

“ Why, thine oracles displaying,
Hast thou given the prescient mind,
But, thy victim still betraying,
Given my words no faith to find ?—
Wherefore curst me in beholding
That, which yet I cannot shun,
Fate—her fearful page unfolding,
Dreadful deeds—which must be done ?

“ Was it well the veil of terror
To uplift before mine eye,
When life but exists in error,
And to know it is to die ?
Take me from my sad vocation,
Dreadful ’tis thy will to see,
And of heavenly revelation
Mortal instrument to be !

“ Give me back the soul benighted,
And, though dark, the mind serene !
Never sang I song delighted,
Since my tongue thy voice has been !
All the future hast thou given me,
But the present made my bane,
From my peaceful thoughts hast driven me :
—Take thy fatal gift again !

“ Never were my fragrant tresses
With the nuptial chaplet crowned,
Since, within thy sad recesses,
Priestess at thy altar found ;
All my youth was passed in weeping,
And my kindred’s bloody doom,
By in horrid visions sweeping,
Wrapped my soul in double gloom.

“ Hark ! each mirthful shout resounding,
All salute the smiling morn,
Youthful hearts with joy are bounding,
Mine alone must droop forlorn ?
Spring to me affords no pleasure,
Though she comes so rich and bland :—
Who e’er counted life a treasure,
Who its inmost depths has scanned ?

Blest Polyxena ! who foldest,
Drunk with passion, in thy arms,
Him, of Grecian chiefs the boldest,
Vanquished by thy heavenly charms !
See ! her bosom proudly swelling
With the joy it scarce contains,
Envies not the blissful dwelling
Where the immortal Thunderer reigns.

“ I, too, my beloved had singled,
One who hung upon my voice ;
One, whose looks with passion kindled,
Bade my swelling heart rejoice ;
Blest might I but with him lightly
To some homely mansion flee ;
But cold Stygian phantoms nightly
Interpose 'twixt him and me.

“ Proserpine is gathering yonder
All her pale and ghastly band ;
Where I rest, or whither wander,
There before my face they stand :
With my gay companions straying,
Still the intrusive shapes I see,
On my youthful spirits weighing :
—Never can I happy be !

“ And the murderous eye is gleaming,
And I see the murderous steel,
And across my pathway streaming
Horrid shapes upon me steal ;
Forced to gaze with looks unwilling,
Knowing—seeing—there I stand,
And, my cruel fate fulfilling,
Perish in a foreign land.”

And her words are yet resounding,
Hark ! what means that stifled groan
From the temple's portals sounding ?
—Dead lies Thetis' mighty son !
Discord all her snakes is shaking,
All the gods escape her frown ;
And the thunder clouds are brooding
Dark o'er Troy's devoted town.





THE FESTIVAL OF VICTORY.

1803.

— : o : —

PRIAM's lordly towers were sunken,
Troy in dust and ashes lay,
And the Greeks, with victory drunken,
Richly laden with their prey,
On their lofty vessels seated,
Thronged the Hellespont's broad strand,
Ere their joyful course they meted
To their own sweet Grecian land.
Raise the song and join the chorus !
For we quit the hostile shore,
And our prows are turned once more
Towards the lovely land that bore us.

In long rows their wail repeating
Sat Troy's beauteous captives there,
Each her mournful bosom beating,
Pale and with dishevelled hair :

With the festive sounds of gladness
Mingled they their song of woe,
Weeping midst their own deep sadness
O'er their country's overthrow.

Fare thee well ! for broken-hearted,
Far from home a master's hand
Drags us to a foreign land !
Ah ! how blest the dear departed !

Calchas pours the due libation,
And the pious offering smokes :
Pallas, who builds up a nation,
And destroys, he first invokes ;
Neptune who spreads out the water
Round the land, and girds the whole ;
Jove, whose Ægis scatters slaughter,
And appals each guilty soul.
None e'er felt the touch of pity !
Long the strife and fiercely fought !
Time his cyle round has brought,
Fallen is the mighty city !

Atreus' son who led their legions,
Numbered their diminished ranks,
Who, convened from distant regions,
Fought upon Scamander's banks ;

And the clouds of gloomy sorrow
Gathered o'er the monarch's brow,
For how few would thence to-morrow
Homeward turn the joyful prow.

Join the song, away with mourning,
Ye who 'scape an early doom,
Whilst the flowers of life still bloom !
Since not all are home returning.

Well, indeed, might pause and falter
Some who reach their native land !
Even at the household altar

Men can grasp the murderer's brand ;
Friends have slain with treacherous kisses,
Whom the bloody fight has spared,
Cried with warning voice Ulysses,
Who Minerva's spirit shared.

Happy whom a wife receiveth,
Home returning, chaste and true,
Fickle woman loves the new,
And too often she deceiveth !

Atreus' son, his vows new-plighted
To his fresh-reconquered bride,
Gazing on her charms delighted,
Clasps her fondly to his side.

Work unholy never speeded,
Vengeance tracks the unrighteous deed,
Not by heaven's just eye unheeded,
Rightful judgment is decreed.
Bad the doom to bad awarded !
Vengeance following never rests ;
And the rights of injured guests
Are by Jove's own presence guarded.

Well the happy it befitteth,
Cried Oileus' daring son,
Jove to praise, in heaven who sitteth
On his high imperial throne !
Fortune never merit cherished,
Choice and justice ever spurned,
For the brave Patroclus perished,
And Thersites safe returned.
Since then, when her urn is shaken,
Fickle fortune knows no choice,
Let him shout with cheerful voice,
Who the lot of life hath taken !

Yes ! the war the best has swallowed !
Ever at our festive rites,
Brother, be thy memory hallowed,
Tower of strength in all our fights !

When the Grecian ships were burning,
Thine the arm that proved our stay !
Craft, the praise of bravery earning,
Bore the costly prize away.

Be thy sacred ashes cherished !
None can boast thine overthrow,
Ajax fell by Ajax' blow !
Ah ! through rage the best hath perished !

To the memory of his father
Pyrrhus pours the generous wine :
Not a portion would I rather,
Noble sire, receive than thine.
Of the lots a man would single,
Far the happiest yet is fame ;
With the dust the flesh may mingle,
Still endures the mighty name.
Bright the splendour of thy glory
In the bard's immortal lay !
All that lives must pass away,
But the dead survive in story.

Since no voice affection raises
To recall the fallen man,
I will utter Hector's praises,
Tydeus' generous son began.

He, his country's brave defender,
Fell his household gods to save :
Crowns the victor greater splendour ;
HIM rewards an honoured grave.
He, his country's brave protector,
Fighting fell, its rock and tower ;
Even his foes their praises shower
On the good, the valiant Hector.

Nestor, aged and wise speaker,
Who three lives of man had seen,
Bears the leaf-encircled beaker
To the weeping captive queen.
Taste it—and thy grief will vanish
In the mirth-inspiring bowl ;
Bacchus has strange power to banish
Sorrow from the wounded soul.
Bacchus has strange power to banish
Sorrow from the wounded soul ;
Taste his wondrous magic bowl,
All thy grief will quickly vanish.

Niobe, on whom were wasted
All heaven's keenest, heaviest blows,
Even she the nectar tasted,
And forgot her bitter woes.

Whilst this potent life-reviver
Mantles languid lips around,
Grief may be in Lethe's river
Deeply sunk and firmly bound.
Yes! whilst yet this life-reviver
Round the languid lip shall play,
Sorrow may be dreamed away,
Deeply drowned in Lethe's river.

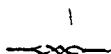
By her god possest, her station
Kept Troy's sad prophetic maid,
Gazing on the desolation
Of her home in ashes laid.
Like yon smoke all earthly being!
Soaring high in pillared form,
Then in empty vapour fleeing!
God alone survives the storm!
Round the vessel care and sorrow,
Round the horse and rider play;
Let us seize the present day,
We may never see the morrow!





THE YOUTH AT THE STREAMLET.

1803.



SAT a youth beside the streamlet,
Wreathing flowers in idle play,
Which the lightly curling waters
Bore in sportive dance away :
“ And so pass my days, as restless
As this ever-flowing stream,
Quickly as these garlands wither,
Withers too my youthful dream.

“ Ask me not, wherefore I languish
In life's youthful, blooming time !
All is full of hope and gladness,
Whilst the Spring renews her prime ;

But the thousand cheerful voices,
Which through quick'ning nature flow,
Waken in my inmost bosom
Only deeper care and woe.

“ What to me avail the pleasures
Which with lovely Spring appear !
There is only one I covet,
And it flies, though ever near :
That dear image, like a shadow,
From my yearning arms is torn ;
Vainly do I strive to clasp it,
And the heart remains forlorn.

“ Oh ! descend, thou lovely beauty,
And forsake thy lordly towers !
All the breathing Spring I rifle,
Thee to deck with earliest flowers.
Hark ! the vocal thickets murmur,
And the streamlet babbling there !
Room is in the lowliest cottage
For a happy, loving pair ! ”





THE PILGRIM.

1803.

I WAS yet in youth's fresh season,
When, its gay delights resigned,
Forth I fared to search for higher,
Left my father's house behind.

All my heritage, my portion,
Cast in cheerful faith away,
And, my child-like instinct following,
Wandering went a pilgrim gay.

For a mighty impulse drove me,
And a mystic voice my ear
Smote : the way, it said, is open ;
Upward till the dawn appear ;

Till before a golden gateway
Thou arrive, and entering in,
Shalt, for wreaths of earthly glory,
Heavenly and unfading, win.

Evening came, and came the morning,
Never—never—still I stood ;
Yet, was undiscovered ever
What I sought, and what I would.

Rivers broad hemmed-in my footsteps,
Barred my way the mountain ridge ;
Paths I forced across the gorges,
O'er the torrents built the bridge ;

Till a mighty stream before me
Lay, which towards the orient flowed,
In I plunged, in faith undoubting
It would bear me on my road.

Onward to a wide-spread ocean
Still the hurrying waters roll,
And a boundless waste is round me,
And no nearer is the goal.

Ah ! no way can lead me thither !
Ne'er, alas ! the heavenly sphere
O'er my head will touch the earthly ;
And the THERE is never HERE !





THE MUSE'S FAREWELL TO
THE READER.

1795.

THE Muse is silent !—On her youthful cheek
The blush of maiden modesty appears :
She steps before thee now her doom to seek,
Valuing thy praise, but undepressed by fears ;
She but the favour of the good desires,
Who worship truth—on trash and tinsel frown :
The few whose souls the beautiful inspires
Alone are worthy to bestow the crown.

No longer may these simple lays survive,
Than while their music soothes some tender heart ;
To sober truth a lovelier form can give,
Or loftier feelings to the mind impart !

They may not charm the after-sons of earth,
 Born but for time, with time they must decay ;
 The impulse of the moment gave them birth,
 With the light dancing hours they pass away.

The Spring awakes ;—and Nature re-assumes,
 Teeming with life, her robe of youthful dyes ;
 Each plant and flower exhales its rich perfumes,
 And sweetest melody salutes the skies :
 Rush young and old to pace the flowery mead,
 And eye and ear drink in the vast delight :
 The Spring departs—the flow'ret drops its seed,
 And naught remains of all that was so bright.





00043255

Digitized with financial assistance from
Government of Maharashtra
on 30 January, 2020

